Vision 2025

Our region offers a competitive business climate where companies make connections and thrive in a vibrant marketplace. Innovative ideas, entrepreneurship, and resources combine to create a dynamic and thriving business community. Municipalities welcome and foster business investment. Infrastructure — water and sewer, transportation, energy and broadband — supports these investments in planned development zones. The expanding base of successful companies creates demand for workers and life wages. This positive business climate creates an environment for successful economic development.

There is a high level of leadership and collaboration among economic development, community development, business, higher education, and elected leaders to achieve this vision and maintain its vibrancy. Hallmarks of success include:

• A diverse and growing economy that offers good-paying jobs, career development, and investment opportunities
• Safe, healthy communities with vibrant cultural resources
• A thriving region reflecting commitments to investing locally and protecting the natural environment
• An outstanding international reputation as an area where people want to live, work, play, visit, and invest

Values Statement

A Values Statement guides behavior and decisions during the process of achieving the vision. Economic development in Tompkins County should:

CREATE INCLUSION PROSPERITY for the diverse local communities that provide meaningful, quality employment opportunities with career paths and a livable income.

SUSTAIN ECONOMIC VITALITY by strengthening businesses and industry sectors that have primed for growth into the future.

LEVERAGE INNOVATION in products and production technologies to drive economic growth.

RETAIN WEALTH LOCALLY through investment in people, infrastructure, and business development, supporting both locally owned businesses and locally managed businesses that invest in their workforce and the local community.

ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE to improve the business climate and to retain and attract workers. Quality of life includes vibrant community centers and neighborhoods, strong schools — both public and private, rich cultural resources, preservation and integration of natural resources, and an abundance of recreational opportunities.

BE COLLABORATIVE AND TRANSPARENT leveraging diverse resources through partnerships, existing robust collaborations and stakeholder engagement, and fostering effectiveness through evaluation and accountability.
Tompkins County is a unique place offering a vibrant small city and engaged rural towns in a superb natural setting that includes three of New York State’s six gorge parks. The Ithaca area appeared in fourteen national “Top 10” rankings in 2013. The skilled workforce, high quality employment opportunities, rich cultural resources, diverse retail and restaurants, and the local food and beverage renaissance all contribute to making Tompkins County a great place to live, work, play and grow a business.

Economic development is a partnership among local governments, community institutions and the private sector to increase quality job opportunities for local people and strengthen the tax base. The primary means of achieving economic development are through:

- Public and community investments in infrastructure, workforce and amenities to attract private sector investment
- Development of the labor market’s skills and the workforce system to increase local people’s ability to secure employment and develop meaningful careers
- Resources that help businesses start, stay and thrive in Tompkins County, targeted to businesses that primarily sell their products and services outside the County
- Institutional capacities and leadership

To engage successfully in economic development, the partners must marshal their resources and market themselves to gain competitive advantage and build a thriving and sustainable economy.

**Goals and Objectives**

Goals provide general directions that are needed to attain the vision, while objectives are specific, time-sensitive targets. There are three overarching strategic development in Tompkins County:

**Goal A**

Strategically invest in community infrastructure and district development to attract and retain local businesses and create high quality jobs and amenities.

**Goal B**

Develop a labor market in which aspirations and qualifications of the workforce are aligned with employment opportunities.

**Goal C**

Strengthen the workforce development system to foster job creation, economic development and community development projects and districts.

**Goals and Objectives**

**Goal D**

Develop a labor market in which aspirations and qualifications of the workforce are aligned with employment opportunities.

| 1. Improve access to better labor markets and promotion of disadvantaged and dislocated workers |
| 2. Foster greater employment of individuals in workforce development |
| 3. Strengthen the workforce development system to foster job creation, economic development and community development projects and districts |

**Strategy and Tactics**

Strategies and tactics provide the approach for attaining the objectives and goals. There are two overarching strategies for economic development in Tompkins County:

**Strategy 1**

Develop an integrated and proactive approach to community-wide economic development leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Create a management and accountability environment for development projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Ensure implementation of priority economic development initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Explore and articulate policy positions on critical economic development issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Establish the Economic Development Council and other boards to implement the TKDC Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Develop a comprehensive and effective economic development program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategy 2**

Conduct an economic development effort that offers a comprehensive suite of programs that effectively meet needs of customers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Deliver and continuously improve conventional economic development programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Develop additional resources to work more effectively in workforce development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Foster a dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem that is rich in resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Create economic development programs that respond to specific opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>